

Legal Clinics

As well as operating the certificate program for those who qualify, legal aid also finances community legal clinics across the province which are staffed by lawyers and trained community legal workers.

Legal aid also finances five student legal aid societies operated by law students.

Both types of clinics can help you with unemployment insurance, welfare, workmen's compensation, juvenile court, debtor-creditor, landlord-tenant, immigration or other problems.

For the name and address of the clinic nearest you, contact your local legal aid office.

Who Finances the Legal Aid Plan?

The Plan is financed by the federal and provincial governments, The Law Foundation of Ontario and by the legal profession in Ontario. Lawyers who participate in the program accept fees which are lower than those they usually charge and they also contribute 25 per cent of those fees to the Plan. In these two ways, the legal profession in Ontario, together with governments, financially supports the Legal Aid Plan so that legal representation and assistance are available to everyone.

Legal Aid Offices

Barrie	114 Worsley St., 737-3400
Belleville	150 Front St., 962-9634
Brantford	75 Chatham St., 759-4250
Brampton	11 Queen St. E., 459-6633
Brockville	2 Court House Ave., 342-5421
Chatham	48 Centre St., 352-1631
Cobourg	24 Cover St., 372-2432
Cornwall	139 Pitt St., 932-4756
Fort Frances	400 Scott St., 274-9571
Goderich	44 North St., 524-9612
Gravenhurst	195 Church St. N., 687-3700
Guelph	27 Douglas St., 824-0170
Hagersville	91 Main St. S., 768-1312
Hamilton	119 Main St. E., 528-0134
Hawkesbury	102 Main St. E., 632-9099
Kenora	154 Main St. E., 468-8968
Kingston	58 Brock St., 546-1179
Kirkland Lake	21 Duncan Ave., 567-6696
Kitchener	133 Frederick St., 743-4306
Lindsay	22 Peel St., 324-6703
London	121 Queen's Ave., 433-8179
Napanee	88 East St., 354-4773
North Bay	215 Oak St. E., 472-4893
Oakville	225 Church St., 845-7591
Orangeville	162 Broadway Ave., 941-4745
Oshawa	74 Simcoe St. S., 576-2124
Ottawa	126 York St., 238-7931
Owen Sound	945 Third Ave. E., 376-9130
Parry Sound	7 Miller St., 746-4011
Pembroke	17 Pembroke St. W., 732-4903
Perth	83 Gore St. E., 267-3123
Peterborough	457 Water St., 743-5430
St. Catharines	183 King St., 685-1012
St. Thomas	16 Pearl St., 631-1198
Sarnia	109 Charlotte St., 336-9371
Sault Ste. Marie	Court House, 253-9401
Simcoe	71 Norfolk St. N., 426-5780
Stratford	91 Brunswick St., 273-1050
Sudbury	144 Elm St. W., 673-8182
Thunder Bay	Court House, 345-1972
Timmins	14 Pine St. S., 264-9473
Toronto	204A Richmond St. W., 598-0200
Walkerton	22 Jackson St. S., 881-0407
Welland	102 E. Main St., 735-1559
Windsor	163 University W., 254-9912
Woodstock	555 Adelaide St., 539-2381

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Do you need legal help?

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Administered for the
Government of Ontario
by
The Law Society of Upper Canada



Ontario Legal Aid Plan,
Provincial Director's Office,
145 King St. West, 10th Floor,
Toronto, Ont. M5H 3L7
Telephone (416) 361-0766



Ontario Legal Aid Plan

Have a problem or concern regarding legal aid? Contact your local legal aid office or the Provincial Director's Office.

What is legal aid?

Legal aid is a program which ensures that people in Ontario are able to receive legal representation or advice even though they may not be able to pay for it themselves.

If you need a lawyer or legal advice but cannot afford it, the Ontario Legal Aid Plan will — if you qualify — pay all or part of your costs.

Who can apply for legal aid?

Any resident of Ontario can apply for legal aid, but to receive help under this program your financial circumstances and the nature of the help you need must first be assessed.

If you do not normally live in Ontario, you may qualify for legal aid in certain cases, but your application must be approved by the Provincial Director of the program.

Is legal aid free?

Not necessarily.

When you apply, your financial circumstances will be assessed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. You will be asked about your income, expenses, debts and assets. If you are receiving support from another person, you may be required to provide information regarding that person's financial resources. In determining whether you qualify, the full amount of your actual monthly expenses may not be allowed. The Ministry's eligibility standards fix maximum allowances for necessary expenses.

It is an offence not to tell the truth about your financial condition.

Depending on the assessment, you may receive free assistance or you may be asked to pay part of the costs of the legal help provided. If the assessment shows that you can pay your own legal costs, you will not qualify for legal aid. Should you be refused, you can ask for a review of the decision.

What kinds of cases come under legal aid?

Just about every type of serious criminal or civil case.

For example, if you are charged with a serious criminal offence under the Criminal Code or The Narcotics Control Act, or if you need help regarding your separation, divorce or other serious civil matter — and providing you qualify financially — legal aid can help you. About 55 per cent of all cases handled under legal aid concern criminal charges and the balance involve civil disputes, most dealing with domestic problems.

Does legal aid pay for appeals?

In some cases, yes.

If you want to appeal a judgment or order you think is unjust, you should apply for legal aid in the usual way. Because of the high costs of appeals, however, your application will be reviewed by a committee made up of lawyers and citizens of your community. This committee will determine whether there is sufficient merit to your appeal under all of the circumstances to justify the expenditure of public funds.

How do you apply for legal aid?

It's simple. Just contact the legal aid office nearest you (see back panel for addresses and phone numbers) or apply at any lawyer's office in Ontario. If your application is approved, you will be given a legal aid certificate which allows you to hire the lawyer of your choice who participates in the program. About 70 per cent of all practicing lawyers make themselves available to the program but if you have problems finding a lawyer to help you with your particular case, contact the legal aid office nearest you or consult The Law Society of Upper Canada's lawyer referral service.

Duty Counsel

Legal aid ensures that a lawyer is available in Provincial Court to help you if you are in jail, on bail or appearing in court because of a summons. This lawyer, called Duty Counsel, can advise you of your legal rights and can help you apply for bail or for an adjournment. If necessary, Duty Counsel will also help you apply for legal aid.

If you are charged with a criminal offence and wish to plead guilty, Duty Counsel will help you before sentence is passed.

The Duty Counsel System helps to ensure that no accused person is unaware of his or her rights in court.

